(c) and (d) Insurance companies do undertake publicity campaign through local press and media, wall posters, hoardings, souvenir and participation in local melas. Advertisements and publicity material are filed with Insurance Regulatory and Development Authority (IRDA) under IRDA (Advertisements) Regulations. IRDA is also conducting Public Awareness Campaigns on Insurance in tie up with Prasar Bharati.

Pendency of Investment in Aviation Sector by PIOs

*197. SHRI ABANI ROY: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Government have cleared a number of FDI proposals worth more than Rs.400 crore during the last one year;

(b) whether it is also a fact that proposals to invest in aviation sector including domestic airlines by the Persons of Indian Origin are pending for more than one year;

(c) if so,what are the reasons for inordinate delay in clearing the FDI proposals of PIOs in aviation sector; and

(d) what steps are being taken to clear these proposals in view of huge investments made by PIOs in aviation sector?

THE MINISTER OF FINANCE (SHRI P. CHIDAMBARAM): (a) Yes, Sir. During the financial year 2004-05, a total of 728 FDI proposals aggregating to Rs. 13,723 crores were approved by the Government through the Foreign Investment Promotion Board (FIPB) route. During the current financial year (upto 11th November, 2005), a total of 291 proposals aggregating to Rs. 5889 crore have been approved.

(b) to (d) No, Sir. No proposal is pending before the Foreign Investment Promotion Board. However, one proposal which involves amendment to the Civil Aviation Requirement under the Aircraft Rules 1937 was received in the Ministry of Civil Aviation in February, 2005. The proposal is under consideration in that Ministry.

Utilization of Ground Water

*198. SHRI RAJKUMAR DHOOT: Will the Minister of WATER RESOURCES be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that all States were asked to re-assess the ground water resources based on latest technology and complete the resource estimation by 31st December, 2004;

(b) whether, all States have completed ground water resource estimation within the stipulated time, if so, the details thereof;

(c) if not, the reasons therefor; and

(d) the steps taken to make optimum and prudential use of ground water?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF WATER RESOURCES (SHRI SONTOSH MOHAN DEV): (a) to (d) Yes, Sir. All the States were requested to reassess the ground water resources based on the recommendations of the Groundwater Estimation Committee (GEC) 1997. However, none of the States could complete ground water resource estimation within the stipulated time. Such estimation has since been completed by all the States/Union Territories. The total replenishable Annual Ground Water Resources of the country is assessed as 433 Billion Cubic Metres (BCM) and the Net Annual Ground Water Availability is assessed as 399 BCM. Existing Gross Ground Water Draft as on March, 2004 for all uses is 231 BCM per year. The Stage of Ground Water Development is 58%.

"Water" being a State subject, it is primarily the responsibility of the State Governments to take steps to make optimum and prudential use of ground water resources. However, following steps have been taken by the Union Government in this regard:—

(i) Model Bill has been circulated to the States/Union Territories to enable them to enact suitable legislation for regulation and control of ground water development. Central Ground Water Authority (CGWA) has also notified specified critical areas for regulating drawl of ground water.

(ii) Steps have been taken to adopt artificial recharge and rain water harvesting measures which include, circulation of Manual/ Guidelines on Artificial Recharge of Ground Water to States/Union Territories, implementation of a Central Sector Scheme for Study of Recharge to Ground Water during the VIII and IX Five Year Plans.

(iii) Steps have been taken for creation of mass awareness on water conservation by holding mass awareness and training programmes on rain water harvesting and artificial recharge of ground water. Water conservation campaigns launched keeping in view the various target groups like youth and children, women, farmers and villagers, etc., publicity done through mass media etc.

(iv) The Ministry of Agriculture has implemented the National Watershed Development Project for Rainfed Areas (NWDPRA), whose impact evaluations have shown that watershed based interventions have led to increase in ground water recharge. Soil and water conservation works are also included under various activities of area development programmes, being undertaken by the Department of Land Resources. However, funds under the above programme are not exclusively allotted for checking declining ground water, which is a resultant activity of moisture conservation works undertaken for the development of watershed areas.

National Competition Policy

*199. SHRI K.B. KRISHNA MURTHY:
SHRI SANTOSH BAGRODIA:

Will the Minister of COMPANY AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether there are several distortions in the economic management of the country, as often policies are framed without acknowledging the market process;

(b) whether Government are considering adoption of a National Competition Policy to provide a declared intent to its resolve of promoting competition; and

(c) whether Government have received any representation on this matter?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF COMPANY AFFAIRS (SHRI PREM CHAND GUPTA): (a) No, Sir. Appropriate measures for management of the Indian economy are taken by the Government, from time to time, keeping in view the prevailing conditions.

(b) Government has already taken legislative and administrative measures to enable competition issues in the economy to be addressed. To this end, in addition to sectoral regulators, the Competition Act, 2002 was enacted following recommendations of the High Level Committee on Competition Policy and Law set up under the Chairmanship of Shri S.V.S. Raghavan. Competition Commission of India (CCI) has been set up and Government is taking measures to enable its full and proper